

**UNDERGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION**  
**SCHULICH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE & DENTISTRY**  
**CHANGES TO THE CURRICULUM: COURSE OR ROTATION**

**Date of last review:** February 2014

**Revised:**

**Approved by the Curriculum Committee:**

**Approved by ECSC:**

**Next revision:** February 2016

**PURPOSE**

Planning for curriculum change requires articulation of explicitly defined goals of the change, plans for implementation, and the methods that will be used to evaluate the results. Planning for curriculum change must consider the incremental resources that will be required including: physical facilities and space, faculty and resident contributions, library facilities and operations, information management, computer software and hardware.

Course development and curriculum renewal should be an ongoing process for all educational offerings of the Doctor of Medicine or Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) program (or “the Program”) in the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry at Western University. The Curriculum Committee (CC) of the Program supports creativity and innovation by Course Chairs, Committees, faculty educators and others involved in planning and delivering the curriculum. In so doing, the CC encourages the exploration of new curricular content and delivery formats based on best practices and innovations in medical education.

Such changes may be motivated by a variety of factors including: the programmatic evaluation cycle recommendations made by the Curriculum Committee through the Instructional Design Committee (IDC) and Quality Committee (QC); the Pre-Clerkship & Integration Committee (PIC) or Clerkship & Electives Committee (CEC); advances in technology for education; advancing curriculum delivery in a distributed medical education model; LCME/CACMS documents; any outcome measures approved by the Program; integration of the curriculum; research findings in health care and international or Canadian visionary works in advancing medical education such as the Future of Medical Education in Canada (FMEC) project.

Course Chairs, thematic leads, and Rotation Directors who wish to embark on changes to the Program curriculum or delivery of their course or curricular content are expected to begin by obtaining feedback and approval from the complete course committee which will include student representatives. In Clerkship the CEC is the course committee.

The curricular governance model of UME at the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry provides for and encourages the discussion of new curricular ideas on an ongoing basis. It is strongly recommended that Course Chairs & Rotation Directors consider and plan new

curriculum processes well in advance of the desired date of implementation, considering the degree to which consultation and additional approval may be required, as per the following protocol:

**Minor Changes:** Minor changes can be implemented after discussion with and approval by the Course Committee.

**Moderate Changes:** Moderate Changes require review and approval by the Course Committee. Following such, there will be documentation of a consultation with the Instructional Design Committee for support and approval. In Pre-Clerkship courses there will be a discussion at the PIC. Following these steps, there will be a written advisement to the CC and subsequent communication to the Quality Committee and in Pre-Clerkship courses the Pre-Clerkship and Integration Committee. For rotations in Clerkship, all changes will be discussed at the CEC as the course committee.

**Major Changes:** In planning for a major change, the course proposal must have been grounded in a broad consultative process and then discussed and approved initially by the course committee. The course will approach the Curriculum Committee for approval. If necessary, changes will be presented to the Schulich Medicine ECSC for approval. At such time as approval is granted, there will be in Pre-Clerkship courses a discussion involving the PIC. Following this the proposal will be reviewed with the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education (AD UME). The AD UME may ask for more work on the proposal after consulting the UME Curriculum Development Team or progress as outlined below. In some cases, a proposal may require further approval by the Executive Committee of Schulich Council (ECSC).

## STATEMENT

### Major changes

Major Changes to a course or official curricular theme require the approval of the Undergraduate Medical Education Curriculum Committee (CC). Examples of a major change include:

- A new course.
- A change to the official curricular theme of a course.
- A change to course assessment methodology.
- A major change to course objectives (more than 40% of existing course objectives).
- A significant change to in-class time for an existing course (+/- 4 hours of existing hour of study).
- A change in the overall course learning modality (e.g.: changing lectures to case based study; Independent Learning to lecture).
- A change in educational setting.
- A major change to course assessment (more than 40% of existing questions).
- A combination of courses.
- A removal or addition of Rotations in Clerkship.
- Combining assessment between courses.

Protocol for proposed major changes

Proposals must first be shared at the level of the Course or Rotation Committee

for collaboration and approval in accordance with the Statement on Course Committees in UME. Rotations wishing change in Clerkship must have the approval of the CEC.

Major changes are submitted in writing for review by the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education who will have the option of:

Sending the proposal to Curriculum Committee for review and decision

Requesting additional work on the proposal in accordance with school, university or accreditation standards

Rejecting the proposal with an explanation.

If the AD UME supports the proposal being reviewed in a timely manner at the Curriculum Committee, faculty will submit a formal written presentation delivered in advance and a verbal presentation at the scheduled Curriculum Committee meeting for review.

Approved major changes must be carried out under the direction of the Curriculum Committee or their designate (i.e. a Course Committee) in consultation with the Instructional Design Committee at all stages of planning and implementation.

In some cases, a proposal may require further approval by the Executive Committee of Schulich Council (ECSC).

Following approval of the proposal, the CC will ensure there is communication to the Quality Committee to ensure that programmatic evaluation protocols are put in place to monitor the implementation and quality of the curriculum change.

Findings of the Quality Committee will be shared with the Course Chair or Rotation Director as well as with the Curriculum Committee.

The AD UME will work with the Course Chair(s), the Curriculum Committee and the UME Office to notify (if necessary) the LCME and CACMS of a major curriculum change:

In accordance with LCME and CACMS accreditation standard ED-9:

“A medical education program must notify the LCME and the CACMS, when applicable, of its plans for any major modification of its curriculum. “

A revision to curriculum may require communication in accordance with the Curriculum Change Reporting Process at [http://www.lcme.org/change-  
notification.htm](http://www.lcme.org/change-notification.htm)

In view of the steps required to enact a major change, course directors and thematic faculty leads are strongly encouraged to begin the process at least six months prior to intended implementation.

In view of best practices in education, financial and human resources and access to facilities/space, major changes will not be approved for implementation when a course is already underway or during the same academic year, with exceptions allowed only upon the request to the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education and approved by the Curriculum Committee.

## **Moderate changes**

Moderate Changes require collaboration and approval at the Course or Rotation Committee. In Clerkship a Rotation change will be discussed for decision at the CEC. Following this there will be a process of review and consultation first with the Instructional Design Committee and for

Year 1,2 or 4 courses with the Pre-Clerkship & Integration Committee (PIC). Examples of a moderate change include:

- A significant change to objectives (more than 20% of existing objectives).
- A significant change to instruction to meet new or existing course objectives.
- A change to the weighting of assessments outside of the protocol established in the Statement on Assessment in UME.
- A significant change to the assessment tools (more than 20% of assessment questions or an entirely new assignment methodology).
- A revision to over 25 % of the modality of instruction in the course.
- A change in physical location of a component of the course or rotation.

#### Protocol for proposed moderate changes

- Such proposals must first be discussed and documented at the Course Committee for decision making in accordance with the Statement on Course Committees in UME.
- Rotations wishing change in Clerkship must have the approval of the CEC.
- There will be a written submission to the Curriculum Committee for approval.
- Approved moderate changes must be carried out under the direction of a designate of the Curriculum Committee (i.e. a Course Committee) in consultation with the Instructional Design Committee at all stages of planning and implementation.
- The Quality Committee must be notified to ensure that programmatic evaluation protocols are put in place to monitor the implementation and quality of the curriculum change.
- Findings of the Quality Committee will be shared with the Course Chair or Rotation Director as well as with the Curriculum Committee.
- There will be a process after approval for Pre-Clerkship courses of a review at the PIC
- The Rotation Director or Course Chair is then free to implement the changes.

### Minor changes

Minor Changes may be implemented without formal approval of the CC. It is expected that any Course or Rotation change will be documented as being reviewed in a meeting of the Course or Rotation committee. Rotations wishing change in Clerkship must have the approval of the CEC. These changes may be shared with similar courses or rotations in the UME Curriculum through the PIC and CEC. Examples of minor changes include the following:

- The conversion of an existing Course or Rotation session to a new or revised learning modality (without a change to the course objectives).
- The improvement in Course or Rotation assessment content (less than 20% of assessment).
- The re-organization of the order in which curricular content is presented.
- A new session that aligns with and/or enhances the existing course objectives and map.
- Collaboration with or integration with another Course or Rotation session.

#### Protocol for proposed minor changes

- All minor changes should be documented as fully discussed and approved by the Course or Rotation Committee and reviewed internally for quality assurance.
- In Clerkship Rotations and Electives, the change will have been discussed and approved by the CEC.
- The change will be forwarded in written communication to the IDC and QC.
- The change may be discussed at the PIC for Year 1,2 and 4 courses.